

Amendments to the Claims

Please cancel Claims 10-14 and 16 without prejudice to or disclaimer of the subject matter recited therein.

Please amend Claims 1-9 and 15 to read as follows.

1. (Currently amended) An ink jet recording apparatus for performing a recording operation by discharging ink from a discharge port of an ink jet head, comprising:

driving means for discharging the ink from ~~said~~ the discharge port in response to a recording signal; and

meniscus vibrating means for vibrating a meniscus in the vicinity of ~~said~~ the discharge port, with a repetition frequency ~~not belonging to~~ outside an audible frequency range or ~~belonging to~~ within a low frequency range, in a case where the ink is not discharged from ~~said~~ the discharge port.

2. (Currently amended) An ink jet recording apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the repetition frequency ~~not belonging to~~ outside the audible frequency range is a frequency higher than 20 kHz.

3. (Currently amended) An ink jet recording apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the repetition frequency ~~not belonging to~~ outside the audible frequency range is a frequency lower than 20 Hz.

4. (Currently amended) An ink jet recording apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the repetition frequency ~~belonging to~~ within the low frequency range is a frequency of 20 to 100 Hz.

5. (Currently amended) An ink jet recording apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the vibration of the meniscus is ~~given~~ applied between the recording operations for discharging the ink.

6. (Currently amended) An ink jet recording apparatus according to claim 1, wherein ~~said meniscus vibrating means for generating the vibration are~~ comprises an electrostriction element.

7. (Currently amended) An ink jet recording apparatus according to claim 1, wherein ~~said meniscus vibrating means for generating the vibration are~~ comprises a heating element for generating a bubble in the ink.

8. (Currently amended) An ink jet recording apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said meniscus vibrating means for generating the vibration are comprises means for causing deformation of a pressure chamber by using an electrostatic force.

9. (Currently amended) An ink jet recording apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said meniscus vibrating means for generating the vibration are comprises a small vibration adding device.

Claims 10-14 (cancelled)

15. (Currently amended) An ink jet recording method for performing a recording operation by discharging ink from a discharge port of an ink jet head, comprising:

a step for discharging the ink from said the discharge port in response to a recording signal; and

a meniscus vibrating step for vibrating a meniscus in the vicinity of said the discharge port, with a repetition frequency not belonging to outside an audible frequency range or belonging to within a low frequency range, in a case where the ink is not discharged from said the discharge port.

Claim 16 (cancelled)